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Daniele A Schoenauer 08/07/2006 07:56:52 AM From DB/Inbox: Daniele A Schoenauer

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 01191

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ACTION: POLE
INFO: AMB OMC DAO PAO POLM DCM

DISSEMINATION: POLE
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:GGRAPPO
DRAFTED: POLE:BMGRIMM
CLEARED: NONE

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INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 001191

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STATE FOR NEA/ARP; NEA/RA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/05/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MU](#)
SUBJECT: TFLE01: IMMEDIATE CEASE-FIRE, SUPPORT FOR GOL:
OMANI PRIORITIES AT AL MINISTERIAL

REF: A. STATE 128426
[1](#)B. TFLE-GRIMM TELECON OF 8/5/06

Classified By: Ambassador Gary A. Grappo, reasons 1.5 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) On August 5, the Ambassador delivered ref A points to Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs Yusuf bin Alawi. Bin Alawi fully agreed with these points and the broader strategy contained therein, but made clear that the Arab League would not move beyond endorsing Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora's seven-point plan and calling for an immediate cease-fire. Bin Alawi rationalized that Siniora's government would fall if pushed beyond what Siniora had already been able to obtain from his cabinet. He stated that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, for a new government to form, providing Hezbollah the opportunity to quickly fill the vacuum given its growing support in the region.

[1](#)2. (C) Bin Alawi argued that obtaining an immediate cease-fire would be the best way to empower the Siniora government, which could then work with the international community to tackle the longer-term issues of forming a stabilization force and disarming Lebanese militias. To this end, bin Alawi relayed an earlier conversation he had with the British Ambassador in Muscat about the UN vote on August 8 for an immediate cease-fire, with a follow-on vote on a longer-term plan shortly thereafter. Bin Alawi cautioned, however, that the international community should be careful not to weigh down the Lebanese government with excessive

obligations. Furthermore, bin Alawi was not optimistic that Hezbollah would disarm willingly, leaving the international community with a daunting task that neither Lebanon nor Israel has been able to achieve.

¶3. (C) Bin Alawi shared with the Ambassador his plans to travel to Amman, where he would join fellow Ministers in traveling to Beirut aboard a Royal Jordanian Air Force flight on August 7. He noted that the Ministers had scheduled a 1300 meeting with Siniora, then a meeting Lebanese parliament speaker Nabih Berri. After a possible roundtable discussion, the Ministers would then return to Amman later in the day. En route to Amman, bin Alawi will stop in Riyadh to consult with King Abdullah and Foreign Minister Saud Al Faisal.

¶4. (C) Comment. By word and by tone, bin Alawi made it clear that Oman's first priorities will be securing an immediate cease-fire and supporting the Siniora government. Avoiding loading up the GOL with obligations and conditions that, in his view, would inevitably lead to the collapse of the government is fundamental to Oman and the Arab League. This is something the Omanis want to avoid at all costs and the reason, we suspect, for the visit to Riyadh where bin Alawi will likely seek Saudi, and more generally, GCC support for the Omani position.
GRAPPO